



# Treatment Court Facts

## Drug Courts Coordinating Commission

**Commission Members**  
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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

### Problems Treatment Courts Can Help Address

- The number of heroin-involved deaths in Missouri has nearly tripled from 118 in 2008 to 338 in 2014. Of the 338 deaths, 258 were residents of the St. Louis and surrounding areas.
- As of December 31, 2016, there were 32,461 offenders in Missouri state prisons. Of these, 7,422 had drug or DWI convictions.
- From October 2014 to September 2015, 3,292 children were removed from their homes as a result of caretaker drug or alcohol use.

### Why Treatment Courts?

- They are a proven cost-effective method for diverting offenders from incarceration in prisons.
- Treatment courts lower the recidivism rate of offenders when compared with either incarceration or probation.
- They allow offenders to remain in their communities, to support their families and to pay taxes.
- Treatment courts reduce the number of babies born addicted, saving the state millions of dollars in lifetime costs in care for children who otherwise would have been exposed prenatally to drugs or alcohol.
- They reduce crime and the need for foster care, and they help ensure that child support payments are made.

### Current Status of Treatment Courts in Missouri

- As of April 30, 2017, there were 142 treatment court programs. Of these, 92 are adult drug courts, seven are juvenile treatment courts, 12 are family treatment courts, 20 are DWI courts and 11 are veterans treatment courts.
- These programs have 4,800 active participants.
- Since their inception, Missouri treatment courts have had more than 18,400 graduates.
- Since treatment courts began, 809 drug-free babies have been born to treatment court participants.
- The graduation rate for all programs in fiscal 2016 exceeds 59 percent.
- In fiscal 2017, the state's treatment court programs requested more than \$16 million in funding, while the commission has \$6 million to spend.
- Currently Missouri has 11 veterans treatment court programs on the circuit level, located in the city of St. Louis, Jackson County, Pulaski County, Boone County, St. Charles County, Jefferson County, Cole County, Clay County, St. Louis County, SWMO Veterans Treatment court serving 3 counties and the SEMO Veterans Treatment Court serving 23 counties. The Kansas City municipal court division also has an operational veterans treatment court program.

### Return on Investment in Treatment Courts

- *Incarceration:* Potential incarceration cost savings or cost avoidance for 1,379 adult offenders diverted from state prisons is about \$10 million.
- *Probation:* Initially, drug courts are more expensive than regular probation. However, due to the higher recidivism rate for probation, savings result in the second year. Based on a city of St. Louis cost-benefit analysis, after two years, the state gains \$2.80 for each \$1 spent on drug courts. After four years, the state gains \$6.32 for each \$1 spent on drug courts.

### Missouri's Commitment to Treatment Courts

- 2013 marked the 20th anniversary of treatment courts in Missouri – the first treatment court started in 1993 in Jackson County. Missouri is a national leader, with more treatment courts per capita than any other state in the nation.
- This growth was due in part to legislative adoption of treatment courts with the 1998 passage of HB 1147, codified at section 478.001, RSMo. In 2001, the legislature enacted and the governor signed into law HB 471, codified at section 478.009, RSMo, to help ensure the coordination and allocation of treatment court funding through the creation of the Drug Courts Coordinating Commission and the Drug Court Resources Fund.
- In 2010, legislation was adopted to establish DWI court programs or dockets in Missouri. This legislation also allows for limited driving privileges (LDP) to be granted by a drug or DWI court program judge or commissioner. As of May 1, 2017, 1,458 LDPs have been granted to DWI court program participants and graduates.
- In 2013, legislation was adopted to establish veterans treatment court programs, which are hybrid drug and mental health court dockets that use the treatment court model to serve veterans struggling with addiction, serious mental illness and/or co-occurring disorders. Through these programs, the courts collaborate with traditional partners found in drug and mental health courts as well as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health care networks, the Veterans' Benefits Administration, volunteer veteran mentors and family support organizations.